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Information Technology Resource Management Council (ITRMC)
Meeting Minutes
(Approved by Council December 17, 2003)

October 14, 2003
2:10 to 3:45 p.m., Arrow Rock Room, Ameritel Inn
7499 W. Overland, Boise, Idaho

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The October 14, 2003, meeting of the Information Technology Resource Management Council (ITRMC) was held in the Arrow Rock Room at the Ameritel Inn, 7499 West Overland, Boise, Idaho.

CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME
Pam Ahrens, Council Chairman, who welcomed members and guests present, called the meeting to order.

ATTENDANCE

Members/Designates Present:
Pam Ahrens, Department of Administration
Senator Hal Bunderson, Idaho State Senate
Col. Dan Charboneau, Idaho State Police
Keith Johnson, Office of the State Controller
Karl Kurtz, Department of Health and Welfare
John Peay, Idaho Supreme Court
Roger Parks, JR Simplot Company
Gary Stivers, State Board of Education
Steve Wilson, State Tax Commission
Designate –
  Susan Simmons, Idaho Transportation Dept.

Absent Members:
David Ekern, Idaho Transportation Department
Rep. Lee Gagner, Idaho House of Representatives
Ken Harward, Association of Idaho Cities
Dr. Marilyn Howard, Department of Education
Mary Elizabeth Jones, Filer, Idaho
Rep. David Langhorst, Idaho House of Reps
Senator Elliot Werk, Idaho State Senate

Others Present:
Eric Beck, Department of Labor
Nathan Bentley, ITRMC Staff
Gary Bronson, Washington Group International
Mike Cannon, Blue Cross of Idaho
Jan Cox, Department of Administration
Rich Elwood, ITRMC Staff
Bill Farnsworth, ITRMC Staff

Don Fournier, ITRMC Staff
Emily Gales, ITRMC Staff
Kevin Iwersen, ITRMC Staff
Bryan Kearney, Idaho Power
Terry Lester, JR Simplot Company
John McAllister, Department of Labor
Sara Nye, Office of the Governor

INTRODUCTION OF KEVIN IWERSEN
Rich Elwood, Statewide Information Technology (IT) Coordinator and ITRMC Staff, introduced new Staff member **Kevin Iwersen**, Statewide Cybersecurity Coordinator. (Prior to joining the ITRMC Staff, Iwersen worked as a senior security analyst at the Department of Administration, Division of Information Technology and Communication Services.) Iwersen's assignment was to focus on important policies and issues surrounding IT security.

STATE OF IDAHO IT STRATEGIC PLAN (DRAFT) DISCUSSION
Elwood reviewed progress made at the morning "IT Strategy Summit." He mentioned there was a common theme within past State IT management planning documents i.e. Telecomm '92, InfoTech '96: the idea of a common, shared infrastructure. To build on past successes, the draft State of Idaho IT Strategic Plan was not revolutionary, but rather *evolutionary*. There were a lot of steps to be taken.

Elwood then asked Council members if there were any *new* key IT factors and/or non-IT factors that needed to be addressed.

- **Organizational drawbacks**. Considering some issues raised in 1992 had not been addressed to-date, **Karl Kurtz**, Department of Health and Welfare, wondered how the State would ensure accomplishment of greater than twenty percent of Plan goals by 2008. In addition, who owned this plan? (It was determined the Council owned the Plan.) He suggested that, so long as the right goals and strategies were identified, each Council member could take ownership of a specific goal or strategy. Progress could be reviewed at every ITRMC meeting.
- **Funding**
  o Long-range financial planning needed to be a key component of effective long-term project planning. To ensure proper attention/allocation, best efforts should be made by agencies to educate members of the Idaho Legislature on appropriations required for projects carried through multiple fiscal years.
  o There were many skilled IT professionals within Idaho State government. Subsequently, lack of financial resources should not inhibit what needed to be done with regard to the Plan.
  o If proper procedures were followed, federal partnerships could be formed to help fund projects.
  o Up-front project funding was essential.
    - Chairman Ahrens later commented that receiving additional State funds within the next twenty-four months might be unrealistic. (**Senator Hal Bunderson**, Idaho State Senate, agreed.) In addition, she was not certain State agencies were totally utilizing existing resources and investments–personnel and otherwise. Perhaps this point could be a focus of how some Plan goals and/or strategies would be implemented. **Steve Wilson** (State Tax Commission) and **Susan Simmons** (Idaho Transportation Department) later agreed, and it was suggested a great deal of security-related projects could be implemented at little or no cost. Simmons suggested State agencies' IT security efforts could be combined.
- Plan scope. Elwood questioned whether the State IT Strategic Plan should only pertain to those entities subject to ITRMC authority. As citizens did not distinguish between government agencies – local or state – Kurtz suggested the Plan should be written with the State as an enterprise in mind. **Roger Parks**, JR Simplot Company, agreed. Further, collaboration among all branches of State government would lead to solutions to major issues.
- **Executive sponsorship**. Discussed were options for leadership support of the State IT Strategic Plan, including the Governor and the ITRMC.
- Plan execution. Once agreement was reached on the goals and strategies to be outlined in the Plan, the Council's next step might be to develop a roadmap of action items, said Parks. This approach could be beneficial in the future acquisition of funding.
- Change-management process. As implementation of proposed goals and strategies could result in a major impact on the State's cultural and organizational structure, a formal change-management process should be adopted.
- Self-funding projects. Parks suggested the State consider initiatives that, when accomplished, would somehow generate revenue at least equal to that initially invested.
- **Consolidation versus centralization**. Consolidation did not necessarily mean centralization.
- Enterprise, defined. **John Peay**, Idaho Supreme Court, called attention to the fact that it was important for Council members to understand and identify what was meant by the term "enterprise." In addition, local governments were not funded by the State, posing challenges to working with these entities. This problem could exist *within* State government, as well. Said Peay, the Council should be cautious about limiting the definition of enterprise to encompass only State agencies.
- Focus on progress made. State advancements made in IT since 1992 should be acknowledged by the ITRMC.

Elwood mentioned Peay had agreed to chair the ITRMC Idaho Criminal Justice Information Integration Task Force.

- Developing partnerships. Kurtz suggested cities, counties, and school districts be approached with a value proposition, identifying how these entities could benefit by collaborating with the State. **Gary Stivers** (State Board of Education), **Colonel Dan Charboneau** (Idaho State Police), and Peay concurred.
- Vision identification. Stivers did not feel there was a clear vision of what the Council was trying to accomplish with the State IT Strategic Plan. Further, until a clear vision was identified, gaining support from all organizations referred to in the Plan would be difficult.
- Value of existing skill-sets. Said Simmons, it was important to recognize and place value on the individual and combined skill-sets held by State operational-level IT personnel. Chairman Ahrens agreed.
- **Resistance to change**. Senator Bunderson warned that, in spite of cost-effective-based and other logic, some agency staff might present counter-arguments for implementing changes in business and IT management processes. Elwood pointed out that opposition of late was generally due to cultural and organizational issues, not those of technology.
- Plan style. Colonel Charboneau recommended the Plan be written in terms understood by anyone. Stivers and Wilson later echoed this recommendation.
- Communications of the plan. Several Council members proposed the development of a plan to communicate the IT Strategic Plan. It was important to identify direction, the way in which goals would be achieved, and who it was necessary to involve. Further, stakeholder input should be solicited, including a survey of State agencies to ascertain existing resources, network status, etc., along with the desire to create a virtual, centralized IT unit.
  - o Parks recommended an owner be assigned to the communications plan, when developed.
- **Plan organization**
  - o Charboneau suggested "Citizen-Centered Services" be the first goal listed in the Plan. This would make it convenient for agencies to determine benefits of the Plan. He also suggested this goal be renamed "*Customer*-Centered Services," and combined with the "State/Local Cooperation" goal.
  - o An action plan should be developed.
  - o Plan goals and/or strategies should be reordered.
- Additional focus group participation. It was suggested the October 14 morning focus group be reconvened for a review and confirmation of the revised State IT Strategic Plan, when complete.
- Success factors. Per Chairman Ahrens, major IT project success or failure was dependant on the people involved and how they perceived their respective roles. (Wilson echoed this remark, adding that how a project was managed was just as important as the project itself.) Ahrens believed a lot of successes could be credited to the ITRMC for creating a culture and environment where people feel comfortable sharing ideas and working together.
- **Plan support**. According to Wilson, one of the Council's most difficult challenges would be to get focus group participants to truly, wholly, and actively endorse the Plan.

STAFF COMMENTS / OBSERVATIONS / REACTIONS
- ITRMC Staff member **Bill Farnsworth** said a lot of concerns expressed at the Summit had previously been relayed to the Staff by various individual State agencies. Regarding consolidation, it should be done right, with an enterprise architecture in place. Also, small steps should be taken in the direction of consolidated services.
- It seemed to **Emily Gales**, ITRMC Assistant, that agencies wanted to move forward with the goals and strategies outlined in the draft Plan; however, there was apprehension due to limited funding and personnel resources. ITRMC members and Staff should do its best to meet with individual agencies in an attempt to promote increased support of the Plan.
- It was interesting to Fournier how much emphasis Summit participants put on **communications**. Another good observation he called attention to was the importance of identifying the relationship between the draft IT Strategic Plan and a higher-level enterprise business plan or vision concerning information technology. Fournier then touched on an earlier comment made, stating the term

"enterprise" did not necessarily denote centralized services. This point was often difficult to communicate.

– Iwersen thought it interesting to hear some of the **cultural issues** raised by focus group participants and agency staff (during one-on-one conversations) alike. He believed that, in the IT community, this piece was often a factor in preventing business-driven goals such as enterprise-level services, to be achieved.

Iwersen then pointed out the **mistrust** that existed between agencies and within the IT community. This was most probably due to concerns about control and service-levels. Communicating the Strategic Plan goals to those affected–as well as soliciting their feedback–was key. Further, from a security perspective, working together and sharing resources was vital to the success of an enterprise.

Finally, if the State was truly going to become an enterprise, the right steps should be taken up front, including the acquisition of sufficient financial resources. Incremental steps.

– **Nathan Bentley**, State Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Coordinator, recognized the importance of good customer service and interaction with agencies, and of the consolidation of common applications and processes. Bentley also pointed out that, although there were opportunities for the State to do more with existing resources, up-front funding would be needed to implement some Plan goals and strategies.

– Elwood emphasized the significance of clearly identifying the Council's overall goal. Executive sponsorship, he said, was absolutely critical. Elwood was impressed with the level of cooperation and honesty shown by focus group participants, and agreed they should be presented with another draft plan for confirmation.

COUNCIL MEMBER EXPECTATIONS / COMMENTS

– Plan sponsorship. Senator Bunderson recommended the ITRMC be the principal sponsor of the Plan, when complete.

– Local government participation. Bunderson felt the Council should include both city and county representation. He spoke a bit on the possible benefits to local governments as a result of active participation. Bunderson later remarked that, for the sake of cost savings, the State should find every opportunity to collaborate with its local governments.

– **Rural Idaho and broadband connectivity**. Bunderson pointed out that in many instances, there was no high-speed Internet connectivity available in Idaho's rural areas. Facilitating the spread of this technology throughout Idaho could lead to more local government cooperation.

– Mistrust. There was brief discussion about apprehension within all levels of government.

– Clarification of Plan goals. Plan goals should be written in a clear, straightforward manner, said Wilson.

– Project plan development. Wilson suggested a project management approach be taken regarding Plan implementation.

– Plan approval timeframe. Col. Charboneau strongly encouraged the lengthening of the approval process. He felt solicitation of stakeholder feedback was critical.

– **Definition of 'enterprise.'** Per Simmons, the term 'enterprise' should be defined in the communications plan, when drafted.

– Simmons suggested the goal titled 'IT Governance' be changed to 'IT *Partnership*.' She explained.

– Cost-benefit analysis. Per Simmons, IDANET would be more marketable once a cost-benefit analysis was performed.

– Plan exposure. State Controller **Keith Johnson** recommended a broader group be exposed to the draft Plan for the benefit of receiving more feedback. Collectively, enough State funding had been lent to information technology, that it ought to be a significant budgetary issue for the Legislature. Further, the State Legislature and Office of the Governor should champion efforts outlined in the Plan.

   o   Said Senator Bunderson, perhaps information technology should be a separate budget item in total.

- Regarding Bunderson's earlier comment regarding participation by local government representatives, Parks mentioned these representatives could be instrumental in extending the ITRMC's message to their peers.
- **Need for coherent marketing plan**.
    o This was an opportunity to acknowledge State achievements made in IT.
    o Peay suggested some marketing opportunities.
- Said Chairman Ahrens, the Council's **vision, mission, and goals** document should be considered for revision along with the State IT Plan. Further, these two documents should be in alignment.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no other business to come before the Council, Chairman Pam Ahrens thanked those in attendance and adjourned the meeting at 3:45 p.m. The next meeting of the ITRMC would be held on Wednesday, December 17 from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the East Conference Room of the Joe R. Williams Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Emily Gales
ITRMC Assistant